

GSID Open Seminar Series on Educational Issues and the Role of Research in Ghana



By Prof. Joseph Ghartey Ampiah (PhD)

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Prof. JOSEPH GHARTEY AMPIAH holds a PhD in science education and is an Associate Professor of science education in the Department of Science and Mathematics Education, University of Cape Coast, and the Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Cape Coast. Other positions held are Head of Department of Science and Mathematics Education and Coordinator, Centre for Research into Quality of Primary Education in Ghana. He was a Visiting Professor at the Centre for the Study of International Co-operation in Education, Hiroshima University, Japan and is currently and Visiting Research Fellow at the same University. He is an international advisory board member of the Compare Journal (UK). He has worked on a number of projects with researchers from other African countries as well as the UK, the Netherlands and Japan.

Time and date:

12:00-13:30

Jan. 20, 2011

Venue:

Conference room #1,

GSID 8th floor

Time and date:

12:00-13:30

Jan. 24, 2011

Venue:

Conference room #1,

GSID 8th floor

**For more detail,
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Seminar 1: Pathways to effective school and classroom assessments: The case of Ghana

The presentation will explore the different pathways classroom assessment has taken over the years in Ghana in the quest for more effective and authentic teacher-based assessment. The changing focus of classroom assessment will be examined in the light of curriculum changes that have taken place in Ghana especially over the past 20 years (1987-2007). The presentation will also look at the different classroom assessment practices (Continuous Assessment, School Education Assessment and School Based Assessment), the shift in emphasis to profile dimensions, and the laborious nature of CA which has led in some cases to the 'manufacture' of marks for students. This practice, coupled with the dissonance between classroom assessment and external (summative) assessment has led to a reduction in the percentage contribution of classroom assessment (summative) to final students' assessment in basic and senior secondary schools and the introduction of statistical moderation. Finally, the presentation will look at lessons learnt in Ghana and make suggestions for policy makers, teachers, curriculum developers, and teachers to improve classroom assessment in schools in Ghana as well as African and Asian countries with similar challenges.

Seminar 2: Language of instruction in elementary school education: The tension between policy and implementation

Language is the most important tool in the teaching/learning process. The choice of the language of instruction used in schools is of utmost importance. Initial instruction in the learner's first language improves learning outcomes. The importance of its effective use in elementary education cannot therefore be over-emphasized. In elementary education there have been two languages: the child's vernacular and English Language which has a much wider use in education. For many decades, the official policy regarding these two languages in education in Ghana has been the use of the vernacular as a medium of instruction as well as one of the subjects to be studied at lower primary, while the English language is studied as a subject. From upper primary onwards the English language becomes the medium of instruction as well as a subject. This policy seemed to work almost perfectly until it began to generate a controversy between policy makers and language professionals. Policy makers in Ghana now regard this policy as unworkable and they believe it has been the cause of the lowering of standards in basic education. These issues will be explored and their implications for education at the elementary school level discussed.